

### **AFFIDAVIT OF COMPLAINT**

My name is Brian A. Weak. I am employed as a Special Agent with the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and have been so employed since July 29, 2001. Prior to employment with ATF, I worked as a law enforcement officer for over five years. I have used overt and covert methods of investigation to including but not limited to undercover operations, search warrants, subpoenas, interview / interrogation, controlled purchases, and long term surveillance operations. I have attended classes and training sessions on the subjects of search warrant executions, investigation of complex crime organization, asset forfeiture, and tracing of illegal proceeds. I have participated in, organized, and initiated investigative efforts that have targeted criminal organizations. These cases have resulted in felony arrest, convictions, and asset seizures.

On October 23, 2008 your Affiant responded to the Crockett County Sherriff's Office in Alamo Tennessee to assist in an investigation involving Federal Firearms Violations committed by Daniel COWART and Paul SCHLESSELMAN.

Upon conducting separate interviews of COWART and SCHLESSELMAN, each stated the following in substance and in part: Approximately 1 month ago COWART and SCHLESSELMAN met via the internet through a mutual friend. Each individual claims to have very strong beliefs and views regarding "White Power" and "Skinhead" views. The individuals began discussing going on a "killing spree" that included killing 88 people and beheading 14 African Americans. Based upon my training and experience, the numbers 88 and 14 have special significance with-in the "White Power" movement. The individuals discussed doing home invasion robberies to fund their "killing spree." Individually, they discussed robbing and/or burglarizing a Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) to gather weapons and ammunition to be "more equipped" for their "killing spree." COWART further took photographs and drew a diagram of specific a FFL in Jackson, Tennessee. Your affiant received a copy of the diagram from investigators at the Crockett County Sheriff's Department and determined that the diagram and photographs depicted what is believe to be an actual FFL in Jackson, Tennessee. COWART emailed and/or sent both diagrams and photographs through webcam to SCHLESSELMAN for review.

SCHLESSELMAN indicated that he owned a Mossberg Model 500 AT 12 gauge shotgun. SCHLESSELMAN advised that he cut the barrel down to approximately 16 inches in length in order to make it "easier to maneuver" during the "killing spree". The firearm was recovered by law enforcement agents and your affiant subsequently measured the barrel, which measured approximately 16 inches in length. A search of the National Firearms Registrations and Transfer Record revealed that the firearm is not registered. No firearms are registered to SCHLESSELMAN or COWART.

COWART and SCHLESSELMAN further stated that on October 20, 2008 COWART traveled from Tennessee to Arkansas, to pick up SCHLESSELMAN and bring SCHLESSELMAN to Tennessee to carry out the aforementioned acts. SCHLESSELMAN brought the short barreled shotgun and a Ruger GP100 .357 revolver he said he had taken from his Father without permission. SCHLESSELMAN also brought ammunition to carry out the robberies and the killing spree. COWART stated that he had stock piled an FASI .308 caliber rifle that he purchased, a High Standard .22 caliber handgun and a Colt .25 caliber handgun both of which COWART stated were stolen from his Grandfather. All of these firearms were recovered during the course of the investigation.

Upon arriving in Tennessee COWART and SCHLESSELMAN further discussed the killing spree to include targeting a predominately African-American school, going state to state while robbing individuals and continuing to kill people. They further stated that their final act of violence would be to attempt to kill/assassinate Presidential Candidate Barack Obama. COWART stated that they planned to use his FASI .308 caliber rifle and a high powered rifle that was to be stolen from the aforementioned FFL to facilitate their attempt to assassinate Obama. SCHLESSELMAN stated that they planned to drive their vehicle as fast as they could toward Obama shooting at him from the windows. Both individuals stated they would dress in all white tuxedos and wear top hats during the assassination attempt. Both individuals further stated they knew they would and were willing to die during this attempt.

On October 21, 2008 COWART and SCHLESSELMAN drove around the area looking for a house to rob. They decided on a specific house in Bells, Tennessee. Later that day, they contacted a friend of COWART'S (Danni STAFFORD) asking her to assist them by driving the vehicle while they committed the robbery. STAFFORD agreed to drive the vehicle. Between 11:00pm on 10/21/2008 and 2:00am on 10/22/2008 COWART and SCHLESSELMAN picked up STAFFORD and all three drove to the predetermined house. COWART and SCHLESSELMAN exited the vehicle each carrying a knife and a handgun. They also had a black duffle bag. As COWART and SCHLESSELMAN approached the house and went to the rear of the house they observed two vehicles and a dog. At that time they decided to leave that location without committing the robbery, agreeing that they would further prepare and try again later. They called STAFFORD who was waiting in the area at which time she came and picked them up. COWART and SCHLESSELMAN drove STAFFORD to her residence and dropped her off.

COWART and SCHLESSELMAN then proceeded to Wal-Mart in Brownsville, Tennessee where they purchased food, nylon rope and two ski masks. Both COWART and SCHLESSELMAN stated that these items were purchased to be utilized in the next home invasion robbery and/or gun store robbery.

Later in the early morning of 10/22/2008 while driving around COWART and SCHLESSELMAN observed a church and decided to shoot a window out. COWART was driving the vehicle and shot out a window using a .22 caliber revolver. The damage to the church, Beech Grove Church of Christ, Beech Grove Road, Brownsville, Tennessee, was verified by the Haywood County Sheriff's Department.

COWART and SCHLESSELMAN then drove back to the COWART's grandfather's residence where they slept for the night. Upon waking up around 11:30 a.m. on 10/22/2008 they drove around further discussing the plans of their "killing spree." Later that evening they purchased window chalk and wrote numerous racially motivated words and symbols on the exterior of COWARTS' vehicle. This included a Swastika and the numbers 14 and 88 on the hood. They were taken into custody by Crockett Co. Sherriff's Office later that night.

Based on the foregoing facts and information your Affiant feels there is probable cause to believe that Daniel COWART and Paul SCHLESSELMAN are in violation of the following Federal Statutes:

- Title 26 USC section 5861(d) Possession of an unregistered firearm
- Title 18 USC section 371 and 922u Conspiring to Steal Firearms from an FFL's inventory.
- Title 18 USC 879 Threats against a Major Candidate for the Office of President.